

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELGRA 05466 261246Z

ACTION IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7360

INFO NAM COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 5466

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG

SUBJ: BELGRADE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE: THE CUBAN ISSUE

REF: BELGRADE 5395

1. AS THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE BEGINS, INDICATIONS FROM DELEGATES WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN ARE THAT THERE WILL BE NO MAJOR DONNYBROOK IN BELGRADE OVER CUBA'S ROLE IN THE MOVEMENT. TANZANIAN MFA OFFICIAL HYERA TOLD USUN OFFICER JULY 23 THAT "THE BLOW-UP IS OVER -- IT OCCURRED IN KHARTOUM" (AT THE OAU, PRIMARILY AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING). HYERA EXPECTED THE "USUAL" WRANGLES OVER REGIONAL ISSUES AT BELGRADE, BUT HE WAS EMPHATIC THAT THE OAU'S RECENT REDEDICATION TO "POSITIVE NONALIGNMENT", AND ITS HARD-FOUGHT "AFRICA-FOR AFRICANS-EXCEPT-WHEN-ONE-OF-US-NEEDS-HELP" TREATMENT OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION WOULD BE TREATED AS DEFINITIVE BY AFRICAN DELEGATES AT BELGRADE (WHO COMPRISE 60 PERCENT OF NAM MEMBERSHIP). SRI LANKAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR JOSEPH REFLECTED ANOTHER FACTOR, THAT THE CUBANS AND YUGOSLAVS HAVE BY NOW "TAKEN EACH OTHER'S MEASURE." HE, TUNISIAN UN PERMREP MESTIRI AND BOTSWANA DEPUTY FOREIGN SECRETARY MOGAMI ALL THOUGHT THAT THE OUTLINES IF NOT THE SPECIFICS OF COMPROMISE HAVE ALREADY BEEN

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BELGRA 05466 261246Z

STRUCK PRIVATELY, AT LEAST INsofar AS THIS NAM GATHERING IS CONCERNED (COMMENT: THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS TRUE). THIRDLY, ONLY MINOR ANTI-CUBAN RUMBLINGS WERE HEARD IN THE CONFERENCE'S PREPARATORY COMMITTEE (PC) -- AND THEY WERE EASILY GAVELLED DOWN. LASTLY, SEVERAL DELEGATES HAVE COMMENTED THAT THE CUBANS MAY CONSIDER THAT THEY HAVE RUN OUT THEIR TACTICAL TETHER AS FAR AS IT WILL GO -- THIS YEAR. PANAMANAIAN

DELEGATE HAMMITT (BELGRADE 5352) IS NOT ALONE IN BELIEVING THAT THE CUBANS HAVE SET LIMITS ON HOW HARD THEY WILL PUSH AT BELGRADE IN ORDER NOT TO JEOPARDIZE ATTENDANCE AT NEXT YEAR'S HAVANA SUMMIT OR THEIR FUTURE ROLE AS COORDINATOR OF AN NACB RETAINING AN ACCEPTABLE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY.

2. THE ABSENCE OF A MAJOR SHOWDOWN AT BELGRADE OVER CUBA, IF SUCH IS TO BE THE CASE, DOES NOT MEAN AN ABSENCE OF IDEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSY. THE CUBANS ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL OBJECT TO SOME OF THE YUGOSLAV FORMULATIONS REGARDING INTERVENTION AND ON THE DIRECTION AND NATURE OF THE NAM. RENEWED ATTACKS BY, E.G. SOMALIA, ON CUBA'S ROLE IN AFRICA COULD STILL OCCUR, DESPITE THE KHARTOUM COMPROMISES. INDICATIONS FROM DELEGATES AT THIS POINT ARE VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUS THAT ANY SUCH CONTROVERSIES WILL PROBABLY BE CONTAINED, IN THE INTERESTS OF NAM UNITY.

3. THUS THE WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE NOW AVAILABLE TO US SUGGESTS THAT NEITHER THE CUBANS NOR THOSE WORRIED BY THE CUBANS WILL PUSH TOWARDS A MAJOR IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION HERE. HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE INDICATOR THAT DOES NOT SEEM TO FIT THIS ANALYSIS: THE CONTINUING STRONG YUGOSLAV STATEMENTS ABOUT THE NEED FOR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN UNITY, OPPOSE INTERFERENCE "FROM WHATEVER QUARTER," ETC. THERE WERE TWO PROMINENT BORBA ARTICLES ON THIS SUBJECT ON OPENING DAY. PRESIDENT TITO'S OPENING REMARKS (SEPTEL) ALSO CONSTITUTE AS STRONG A STATEMENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BELGRA 05466 261246Z

ON ISSUE OF BLOC MEDDLING AS WE HAVE SEEN FROM ANY YUGOSLAV SOURCE IN RECENT WEEKS, EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR EARLY JULY PRESS POLEMICS WITH THE CUBANS OVER ARTICLES APPEARING IN HAVANA. IF IN THE YUGOSLAV VIEW A "SATISFACTORY" OUTCOME IS ASSURED ON THIS ISSUE, WE MUST ASK OURSELVES THEN WHY DO THEY KEEP HAMMERING AWAY AT IT? ONE THING SEEMS ENTIRELY CLEAR: THAT THE YUGOSLAVS ARE DETERMINED TO HAVE THEIR WAY ON BASIC PRINCIPLES AND --TITO HAVING SET THEM FORTH SO DIRECTLY -- ARE REASONABLY CONFIDENT OF SUCCESS.

4. ANOTHER THREAD, AT LEAST AMONG INDIAN, TANZANIAN, AND SRI LANKAN DELEGATES, IS CRITICISM OF US "OVER-REACTION" TO CUBA'S ROLE IN THE NAM. INDIAN MFA OFFICIAL MULYE SAID THAT GOI NOTED THE RECENT "PANIC" AMONG WESTERN EMBASSIES IN DELHI ON CUBA'S ROLE IN THE NAM. IN HIS VIEW, THE NAM, AND EVEN ITS SMALLER COORDINATING BUREAU, ARE SIMPLY TOO BIG, AND INTER-NON-ALIGNED AFFAIRS TOO OPEN AND FLUID, FOR ANY ONE STATE TO FORCE OR MANIPULATE A CHANGE IN DIRECTION. ONE SOURCE OF SYMPATHY FOR CUBA AMONG NAM STATES, HE SAID, WAS LINGERING NAM RESENTMENT OVER FIFTEEN YEARS OF WESTERN NEGLECT AND ANTIPATHY TOWARD THE MOVEMENT. TANZANIA'S HYERA SAID THAT, "WHEN CUBA CAME TO HELP AFRICANS, ALL THE US COULD DO WAS SEE THEM AS COMMUNISTS INSTEAD

OF SEEING THE REASONS FOR AFRICAN INVITATIONS--THAT STARTED YOUR
IDEOLOGICAL FEUD." SRI LANKAN UN COUNSELOR RODRIGO ALSO
CAUTIONED A MORE RELAXED APPROACH. HE NOTED THAT, EVEN WITHOUT
FORMAL STRUCTURE, THERE WAS NOW A CONSIDERABLE BODY OF
"DURABLE" NAM PRECEDENTS--SET BY THE MAJOR MEETINGS--THAT
DEFINED THE MOVEMENT AND ITS AIMS. THESE PRECEDENTS WERE
STRONG ENOUGH, HE SAID, TO BUFFER THE NAM AGAINST SWINGS
FROM THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT.
EAGLEBURGER

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